

VZCZCXYZ0006
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #0483 0972240
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 062240Z APR 08
FM AIT TAIPEI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8633
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 8134
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 9373

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 000483

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - NIDA EMMONS
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-CHINA-TAIWAN RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their April 3 news coverage on president-elect Ma Ying-jeou's interest in visiting the United States before his inauguration; on the infighting and reform of the defeated DPP; on Ma's remarks Tuesday that the ban on the direct exchange of the New Taiwan dollar for the Chinese yuan will be lifted by the end of 2008; on the investigation into a China Airlines procurement case that involved senior government officials possibly taking kickbacks; and on Wang Chien-ming, the Taiwan-born Yankees starting pitcher, who got his first win of the season Wednesday. Both the pro-unification "United Daily News" and the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" reported on their inside pages that Ma's close aides are still negotiating with Washington about Ma's request to visit the United States before May 20, and both sides are still hoping to find a way to handle the matter in a manner acceptable both to Ma and to Washington. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "China Times" op-ed said the DPP's governance over the past eight years has put Taiwan in an awkward position, which pleases neither Washington nor Beijing. The article urged the incoming KMT administration to take advantage of Taiwan's democratic values and use them to strive for the overriding interests of Taiwan. End summary.

[Ed. Note: A searchable archive of past issues of AIT/Taipei's media review products may be found at www.intelink.gov/communities/state/taiwanmediareview.]

"Use Soft Power to Highlight Taiwan's Values"

Professor Chao Chun-shan of Tamkang University's Graduate Institute of China Studies opined in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (4/3):

"The question of whether president-elect Ma Ying-jeou is able to visit the United States before his inauguration has aroused the concern of the Taiwan people. Signals from all sides indicate that perhaps the key still lies in Washington-Beijing ties. Ma won the March presidential election with an overwhelming majority. Given the intimacy of the substantive relations between Taiwan and the United States and the fact that Washington always boasts about its promotion of democratic values, it really does not make sense for Washington to reject Ma's visit. But in consideration of the United States' practical interests, it seems that Washington must also take Beijing's reaction into consideration. All these have highlighted the external situation Taiwan is facing and the question of how the KMT is going to resolve Taiwan's diplomatic predicament after it takes over the helm. ...

"Washington-Beijing relations reveal this characteristic of 'uniting while also competing', which thus provides traditional allies of the United States, such as Japan and South Korea, with an opportunity to expand their relations with Beijing. Under the diplomatic banner of pursuing 'independence and self-determination,' these countries seek to maintain close military contact with the United States on the one

hand and proactively to strengthen their bilateral ties with Beijing on the other. In other words, these countries have broken away from the traditional Cold-War-era thinking and no longer regard themselves as 'pawns' used to contain Beijing. Instead, they want to keep pace with the United States and jump on the bandwagon of engaging with Beijing. ...

"A look back at Taiwan shows that DPP rule over the past eight years has landed Taiwan in an awkward position that pleases neither Washington nor Beijing. The United States took Taiwan's loyalty toward it for granted, but Taiwan did not get the reward it deserves. On the contrary, the DPP's hostility against Beijing has won Taiwan an evil reputation of being a 'troublemaker.' How unbearable this is for the Taiwan people! This writer personally believes that the key lies in the fact that the DPP administration has overemphasized the United States' 'containment' of Beijing while overlooking the aspect of [Washington's] 'engagement' with Beijing. In other words, the DPP administration has failed to take full advantage of Taiwan's values and used them to strive to win the greatest advantage for Taiwan. ..."

YOUNG